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In the University Journal of the University of Nebraska, for December, 1914 (pages 25-26), Dr. H. B. Alexander, some of whose utterances on the Classics were given in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 7:33-35, had A Letter to Students.

Since what Dr. Alexander said is even more true now, part of his letter is here reproduced:

And what does this war mean for the intellect of the world? France, England and Germany have carried this earth's intellectual burdens and achieved its intellectual triumphs for the past five centuries. The training of a mind is not accomplished in a day; its gifts to society are the slow labor of years. Can anyone doubt that, whatever the outcome of the present war in a political way, its effects upon the trained minds of Western Europe can only be disastrous? The higher works of peace, when peace is restored, will suffer more terribly than all else. Science, scholarship, literature, art, these must give way to the more pressing needs of political and economic and social reconstruction; the machine must be rebuilt before its product can be manufactured, the garden must be regrown before its fruits can be forthcoming. Partly this will be due to economic stress, for mental achievement is only possible in well-provisioned societies; partly it will be due to actual loss of trained minds, the young men of university training whose lives are lost or maimed, the gifted children to whom education must be denied, the many hundreds of men whose nervous and mental strength will be permanently weakened by the stress of war; and in part it will be due to the fact that Europe will require all its surviving intellectual powers to repair its immediate ills. France, exhausted by the Napoleonic wars, required the long lethargy of the reign of Louis Phillippe to regain partially its lost spiritual energy. Can any man think that the present war will not be far more deadly to the spirit of modern Europe?

And in view of this, what is our part? America is ill-prepared to become the bearer of the light of culture; it is to no trained runner that the torch is cast. Yet it is obvious that the race is to us. For the next generation, perhaps for the next century, or five centuries, we must stand in the forefront of progress, performing a great, if not the greater, share of the world's mental labors—if the work is to be performed at all. It would be the idlest of conceits for us to suppose that we can succeed in such task without the most intense and serious effort; we are as yet far from the van of progress, and must achieve what the other nations are losing before we can pass them; the immediate future of the world, despite our best, is certain to be a period of retrogression; nevertheless, if we persist, we may hope eventually to save the loss, and better it with gain. In any case the duty of effort is clear.

But what is the first step?

It is one the students must take—a step for our youth. I have already said that the training of minds is slow. It is the slowest of all work in those fields which require long and impersonal effort; for work in science and scholarship and the patient analysis of history. Without work of this character, civilization must perish; hitherto, we have borrowed its fruits from generous fatherlands; now we must mature them by our own toils.

I wish . . . to indicate one great gap in our national preparation for the task that is ours—as I think, the greatest gap. More than any other great folk we are in need of men and women with a clear sense of the sources and promptings of our civilization, with a developed historical sense, in its richest meaning. What differentiates civilized men from the savage is the civilized man's knowledge of his own history; such knowledge is the only sure anchor of culture. We cannot know ourselves until we know the past not only of those who were our physical fathers, but above all of those peoples who have given us our spiritual heritage. This is no light or easy study. It calls for knowledge of languages, ancient and modern; it calls for devotion to political, economic and social history, and to the logical analysis of fact; it calls for familiarity with the literatures, arts and philosophies of western peoples, from Greek and Hebrew to the English and German; and it calls for a power of effective use of this knowledge. Not all is open to one student, though he give a lifetime to the field; but if many students, from many angles, give earnest effort to this central task of preserving as living thought the hard-earned experience of generations, then indeed we may be certain that, whether America's addition to the world's culture be great or little, it will yet have won the gratitude of future generations, by preserving, in time of threatening darkness, man's most precious wisdom.

C. K.

WHERE THE LATIN GRAMMAR FAILS

It may be questioned seriously whether it is good policy to base instruction in Latin grammar almost wholly on the Latin text which the class is reading. But it is through this process of dissecting the reading lesson that teachers usually accomplish the major part of the grammatical drill, reserving comparatively little time for practice in translating English into Latin.

The fact that this is the conventional method of teaching Latin grammar may have insensibly influenced the makers of the standard School Grammars; but, however this may be, it is certainly true that the statements in these Grammars are often drawn with a view primarily to the elucidation of a Latin text,